

Rep. Peter Welch (D-Vt.) today joined 87 House colleagues in sending a letter to House leadership urging them to fund the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) at levels consistent with what Vermont received in FY2011.

The funding levels set forth in the FY2012 draft House appropriations bill would result in a reduction in LIHEAP funds of more than 30 percent for Vermont. In FY2011, Vermont received \$26 million in LIHEAP funding, benefiting 27,000 Vermonters.

“Even in good economic times, LIHEAP is a critical lifeline for countless Vermonters,” said Welch. “Now, with wages stagnant, a tough economy, rising fuel prices and Vermonters struggling to recover from Tropical Storm Irene, it is even more critical. Cutting this crucial assistance at a time of rising needs should not be an option.”

The Department of Energy is reporting an increase in the price for most heating fuels this winter, with home heating oil expected to reach record highs. The National Energy Assistance Directors' Association anticipates 9.4 million households will seek assistance with their energy costs through the LIHEAP program this winter, up from 8.9 million last year.

Last month, Welch sent a [letter](#) calling for the immediate release of as much LIHEAP funding as possible under the current continuing resolution that expires November 18th

. On November 1st

, \$11 million in LIHEAP funding was released to Vermont.

A copy of the letter to House leadership can be found [HERE](#) .

Rep. Peter Welch (D-Vt.) today joined 87 House colleagues in sending a letter to House

leadership urging them to fund the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) at levels consistent with what Vermont received in FY2011.

The funding levels set forth in the FY2012 draft House appropriations bill would result in a reduction in LIHEAP funds of more than 30 percent for Vermont. In FY2011, Vermont received \$26 million in LIHEAP funding, benefiting 27,000 Vermonters.

“Even in good economic times, LIHEAP is a critical lifeline for countless Vermonters,” said Welch. “Now, with wages stagnant, a tough economy, rising fuel prices and Vermonters struggling to recover from Tropical Storm Irene, it is even more critical. Cutting this crucial assistance at a time of rising needs should not be an option.”

The Department of Energy is reporting an increase in the price for most heating fuels this winter, with home heating oil expected to reach record highs. The National Energy Assistance Directors' Association anticipates 9.4 million households will seek assistance with their energy costs through the LIHEAP program this winter, up from 8.9 million last year.

Last month, Welch sent a [letter](#) calling for the immediate release of as much LIHEAP funding as possible under the current continuing resolution that expires November 18

th

. On November 1

st

, \$11 million in LIHEAP funding was released to Vermont.

A copy of the letter to House leadership can be found [HERE](#) .